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Strategy and Diplomacy 1870-1945: Eight Studies

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secure Taiwan help stabilize the entire Northeast, but its upgraded military assets might be incorporated into an integrated anti-Soviet defense of the region." For it is the Soviet's military capability, after all, that is the single most important factor in the complex security environment of Northeast Asia.

Given the recent pilgrimages to the PRC by US Government officials, suggestions that US Foreign Policy planners should reexamine and reinforce our ties with Taiwan may not be fashionable, but they are clearly germane. *The Iron Triangle* seeks to present the view that in Northeast Asia the US security partners are Japan, the Republic of Korea and the Republic of China (Taiwan). Also, "However much the People's Republic may be discomfited by the reality of the present circumstances, it is upon the defense capabilities of those nations that its ultimate security rests."

The Iron Triangle is carefully written and thoroughly researched. It is not polemical towards pro-PRC thought, but rather argues for a more balanced approach in our two China policy, feeling that the present US policy towards China is uneven and in fact may be undermining the very stability we seek to achieve in the region. Six tightly written chapters centering on security—"The Security Threat-The Soviet Union," "The Security of Japan," etc.—are well documented, but without expense to a readable style. An excellent bibliography is also provided.

Northeast Asia will play an increasingly critical role in the global strategy of the superpowers throughout the remainder of this century and into the next. The interests of four of the world's major powers—Japan, the United States, the PRC and the Soviet Union—intersect in Northeast Asia. *The Iron Triangle* offers the reader cogent thoughts on how to formulate a regional security policy that will protect the integrity and security of Northeast Asia while advancing US economic, strategic and moral issues. The authors' views may be controversial, but that controversiality is their greatest value. The "China debate" is far from over and *The Iron Triangle* offers ammunition or information depending on the reader's point of view. In either case, the work is a professional study of a complex problem.

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Kennedy, Paul. *Strategy and Diplomacy 1870-1945: Eight Studies*. London and Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1983. 254pp. $24.95

One of the major writers in the area of naval history today is Professor Paul Kennedy of Yale. This small book, comprising eight of his essays, should be required reading for all who think about strategy. Where other naval historians have only paid lip service to the notion, Kennedy has in fact enlarged his studies of navies to embrace economic, diplomatic and imperial history and analyses equally. From his specialized work on the decline of the British Empire in the

face of Germany in one arms race and two world wars, he is moving toward a comparative examination of why other empires have failed as well. America, take note!

The long-term success of the British Empire can be largely explained, in Kennedy's words, by "the political culture of most of the British elite—the dislike of extremes, the appeal to reasoned argument, the belief in the rationality of politics and the necessity to compromise." In his brilliant opening essay, "The Tradition of Appeasement in British Foreign Policy, 1865-1939," for example, he demonstrates that the pre-Munich British view of appeasement was positive, respectable and natural for a small island nation, and that the policy succeeded for 75 years.

Based on morality, economics and the global and domestic situations, Britain's appeasement policy was, in his view, "a policy of settling international quarrels by admitting and satisfying grievances through rational negotiation and compromise, thereby avoiding the resort to armed conflict which would be expensive, bloody, and possibly very dangerous." He shows that this policy succeeded by the extremely gradual demise of the Empire, in which its subject peoples retained the British sense of law and justice even as they sought independence, and also welcomed a continued place in the metamorphosis which became the Commonwealth. The essay "Why Did the British Empire Last So Long?" details this change and lays stress on the minimum of force utilized by Britain not only in its colonies but in the international arena. Pushed to the wall, however, Britain chose war in 1914 and again in 1939, when reluctantly it abandoned appeasement. The decline may have been inexorable, but it was at least reasoned and even controlled.

In many ways, "Strategy *versus* Finance in Twentieth-century Britain" is the most important essay, showing how well the British realized economics to be the fourth arm of defense. Thus arose the irreconcilable contradiction at the turn of the century when Britain still endorsed free trade in the midst of rising closed neo-mercantilistic imperial systems. Another paradox, in the 1920s, was the yielding of the aristocracy to a more representative democracy based on social and economic reforms which created costs that could only be met by cutbacks in defense spending.

"Arms-races and the Causes of War, 1850-1945" argues persuasively that arms races do not necessarily lead to war, nor are all wars caused by them. Many such races have been controlled and are not an "inevitable upward spiral" to war, a good case in point being the American-Japanese naval arms race which culminated in the Washington Conference of 1921. Kennedy's plain talk, rooted in superb syntheses of historical facts and statistics, warns us that arms negotiators are too mesmerized by the tools of war to the total exclusion of the *equally* important political, ideological, racial, economic and territorial factors of arms races.

Kennedy's special interest, the

Anglo-German naval arms race of 1898-1914, is treated in two essays dealing with its strategic aspects, and on Admirals Fisher and Tirpitz. He makes good use of newly released documents to show how poor a strategist Tirpitz was. Having misinterpreted Mahan, Tirpitz did not appreciate the need to control trade routes rather than "the sea" in general. He reveals how Tirpitz actually believed he could build a larger fleet of capital ships than Britain's—a fallacy which befell Napoleon, too, and which gives one pause over the current Soviet foray into carrier construction.

Juxtaposing Mahan and Mackinder, Kennedy argues in favor of the latter's continental theory that control of the European Heartland is superior to Mahan's claims for maritime supremacy in the twentieth century. This essay is the most arguable one in the book, for it confuses the basic agricultural character of central Russia with industrial resources. He sees overland transport as superior to over-water movement and air power to naval blockade and amphibious operations. But he is primarily a Europeanist who ignores the strategic mix of seaborne air power, naval blockade, and seaborne assault which decided the war in the Pacific. In his essay on Japanese strategy in that conflict, Kennedy fails to see Japan as a continental power even though he blames the army for the ultimate defeat and even concludes that the above naval mix brought Japan to her knees.

Much of Kennedy's book has many obvious inferences for the United States today, though some are buried between the lines. One key to the British imperial success, however, deserves imitation by American policymakers: Kennedy quotes a British statesman who in 1907 admired British national policy for being harmonized "with the general desires and ideals common to mankind, and more particularly . . . is closely identified with the primary and vital interests of the majority . . . of the other nations."

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Macmillan, Harold. *War Diaries: Politics and War in the Mediterranean.* New York: St. Martin's Press. 1984. 804pp. $29.95

From January 1943 until May 1945 Harold Macmillan was the British Minister Resident in the Mediterranean, first at Algiers and later in Italy and Greece. In the American order of things he would have been called Political Adviser, but with a difference and it is that difference that makes these diaries fascinating to read 40 years later. For Macmillan was a political animal beholden directly to Churchill and, at times, to the Conservative Party. As such he had far more power than any American political adviser would, as his American opposite number, Robert Murphy, would have been the first to admit. The British were amazed constantly during World War II (and appalled in Korea) at the wide latitude for independent decision given American theater commanders. British army commanders as distinguished as Sir